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*World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly*

July 23, 2023



# THE LORD *Does Not* GIVE UP ON US

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by Fr. Jose S. Aripio, SSP

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A parishioner of mine, named Esperanza, once told me that she has two sons. When they were young, the younger one was so naughty, stubborn, and hard-headed. He would go to school with only a notebook in his pocket and would hardly study at home. He would even pick fights with the boys in the neighborhood.

Esperanza can now look back with surprise and gratitude because this son would turn out to be a true revelation—a successful businessman and a loving husband and father. Esperanza had never given up on him, never compared him to his better-behaved older brother. She loved and accepted him for who he was.

Today's Gospel parable of the wheat and the weeds tells us about the goodness and patience of the Lord, and his desire to give us chances to reform. It reminds us that God is the source of all good things. He sows only good seeds and

is never the source of evil.

This parable was directed to Jesus' disciples, not to outsiders like the religious leaders who were antagonistic to Jesus. As such it had something to say to the Christian community for whom Matthew wrote the Gospel. The community was painfully aware of the presence of members who would scandalize others by their un-Christian behavior. How could it be that in the community cleansed by Christ's precious blood, there were manifestations of sins and scandal? How should believers treat their erring members?

Jesus' parable is a reminder that in the community of the Lord, light and shadow, goodness and evil, interplay. Imperfections and sins are to be expected. But the solution is not to separate good from evil, much less to uproot the evil ones. As weeds are indistinguishable from wheat in the early stage, it is

impossible for human beings to judge rightly the true state of the human person in his heart of hearts. Otherwise the warning of the master will come true: "If you pull up the weeds, you might uproot the wheat along with them."

Jesus does not give up on people because of their faults and sins. For Jesus, the sinner always has a future. People can change for the better. While the weeds cannot become wheat in the literal sense, in the spiritual order the evil person can become good. Good things can come out of the bad.

The parable warns us about judging others. It is the Lord who alone can judge rightly, and he judges in his own time. We will do well to heed the advice of the apostle Paul: "Do not make judgment before the appointed time, until the Lord comes, for he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will manifest the motives of our hearts" (1 Cor 4:5).

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 54 [53]:6, 8)

*(Recited when there is no opening song.)*

**See, I have God for my help.  
The Lord sustains my soul.  
I will sacrifice to you with  
willing heart, and praise your  
name, O Lord, for it is good.**

### Greeting

*(The sign of the cross is made here.)*

**P**—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**All**—And with your spirit.

### Introduction

*(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)*

**P**—Today's Gospel parable of the Weeds among the Wheat gives us an explanation of faith: God sows only good seed; evil comes from the hearts of men and women who choose not to obey him. Still, God patiently waits for the harvest, bearing with slow growth and making room for repentance.

Let us ask for the gift to be patient with one another's faults and to heed God's call for a change of heart.

### Penitential Rite

**P**—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. *(Pause)*

**P**—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

**All**—Lord, have mercy.

**P**—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

**All**—Christ, have mercy.

**P**—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

**All**—Lord, have mercy.

**P**—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All**—Amen.

## Gloria

**All**—Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### Collect

**P**—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Show favor, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**All**—Amen.

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD



### First Reading

(Wis 12:13, 16–19) *(Sit)*

*Salvation history is a testimony of God's merciful and enduring love. Meditating on God's patience and mercy, we in turn must be kind to one another.*

### A reading from the Book of Wisdom

THERE is no god besides you who have the care of all, that you need show you have not unjustly condemned. For your might is the source of justice; your mastery over all things

makes you lenient to all. For you show your might when the perfection of your power is disbelieved; and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity. But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much lenience you govern us; for power, whenever you will, attends you. And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind; and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.

—The word of the Lord.

**All**—Thanks be to God.

### Responsorial Psalm (Ps 86)

**R**—Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Sr. M.C.A Parco, fsp



**1.** You, O LORD, are good and forgiving,/ abounding in kindness to all who call upon you./ Hearken, O LORD, to my prayer/ and attend to the sound of my pleading. **(R)**

**2.** All the nations you have made shall come/ and worship you, O LORD,/ and glorify your name./ For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds;/ you alone are God. **(R)**

**3.** You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious,/ slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity./ Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant. **(R)**

### Second Reading

(Rom 8:26–27)

*We struggle with imperfection, even in prayer, but God is patiently at work in us through the Holy Spirit who helps us in our weakness.*

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:  
The Spirit comes to the aid  
of our weakness; for we do  
not know how to pray as we  
ought, but the Spirit himself  
intercedes with inexpressible  
groanings. And the one who  
searches hearts knows what  
is the intention of the Spirit,  
because he intercedes for  
the holy ones according to  
God's will.

—The word of the Lord.  
**All—Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia** (Cf. Mt 11:25) *(Stand)*

**All—Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed  
are you, Father, Lord of heaven  
and earth; you have revealed  
to little ones the mysteries of  
the kingdom. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel** (Mt 13:24–30) *(Short form)*

**P**—A reading from the holy  
Gospel according to Matthew  
**All—Glory to you, O Lord.**

JESUS PROPOSED another  
parable to the crowds, saying:  
“The kingdom of heaven may  
be likened to a man who  
sowed good seed in his field.  
While everyone was asleep  
his enemy came and sowed  
weeds all through the wheat,  
and then went off. When the  
crop grew and bore fruit, the  
weeds appeared as well. The  
slaves of the householder  
came to him and said, ‘Master,  
did you not sow good seed  
in your field? Where have  
the weeds come from?’ He  
answered, ‘An enemy has  
done this.’ His slaves said  
to him, ‘Do you want us to  
go and pull them up?’ He  
replied, ‘No, if you pull up  
the weeds you might uproot  
the wheat along with them.  
Let them grow together until  
harvest; then at harvest time  
I will say to the harvesters,  
“First collect the weeds and tie  
them in bundles for burning;  
but gather the wheat into my  
barn.”’”

—The Gospel of the Lord.  
**All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus  
Christ.**

**Homily** *(Sit)*

**Profession of Faith** *(Stand)*

**All—I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty, maker of  
heaven and earth, of all things  
visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus  
Christ, the Only Begotten Son  
of God, born of the Father  
before all ages. God from God,  
Light from Light, true God from  
true God, begotten, not made,  
consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were  
made. For us men and for our  
salvation he came down from  
heaven, *(At the words that follow up  
to and including and became man, all  
bow.)* and by the Holy Spirit was  
incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.**

**For our sake he was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate, he  
suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third  
day in accordance with the  
Scriptures. He ascended into  
heaven and is seated at the  
right hand of the Father. He will  
come again in glory to judge  
the living and the dead and  
his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life, who  
proceeds from the Father and  
the Son, who with the Father  
and the Son is adored and  
glorified, who has spoken  
through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy,  
catholic, and apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the  
forgiveness of sins and I look  
forward to the resurrection  
of the dead and the life of the  
world to come. Amen.**

**Prayer of the Faithful**

**P**—God has sown his Word  
in our hearts so that we may  
grow fruitful in our Christian  
discipleship. With confidence,  
let us call out to the Father:

**R—Father, perfect us in your  
love.**

**C**—May the Church become  
more fully conscious of her  
mission as evangelizer of the

Word so that people may be  
led to renewal and conversion.  
We pray: **(R)**

**C**—May government leaders  
reject the culture of death and  
revenge by tempering their  
sense of justice with mercy  
and compassion. We pray: **(R)**

**C**—May family members  
nourish themselves with daily  
meditation on your Word and  
constant acts of charity. We  
pray: **(R)**

**C**—May our beloved dead see  
the light of your eternal embrace  
and be given sure hope of the  
resurrection. We pray: **(R)**

**C**—Let us pray for the urgent  
concerns of our community  
and our personal intentions  
*(pause)*. We pray: **(R)**

**P**—Perfect us in your love,  
almighty Father, and help us  
in our weakness. Send your  
Spirit to strengthen us in our  
struggle against evil. You who  
live and reign for ever and ever.  
**All—Amen.**



**Presentation of the Gifts**  
*(Stand)*

**P**—Pray, brethren...  
**All—May the Lord accept the  
sacrifice at your hands for the  
praise and glory of his name,  
for our good and the good of  
all his holy Church.**

**Prayer over the Offerings**

**P**—O God, who in the one  
perfect sacrifice brought to  
completion varied offerings  
of the law, accept, we pray,  
this sacrifice from your faithful  
servants and make it holy, as  
you blessed the gifts of Abel,  
so that what each has offered  
to the honor of your majesty  
may benefit the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**All—Amen.**

**Preface** *(Ordinary Time VI)*

**P**—The Lord be with you.  
**All—And with your spirit.**



**P**—Lift up your hearts.  
**All**—We lift them up to the Lord.

**P**—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All**—It is right and just.

**P**—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal.

For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

**All**—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (*Kneel*)

**Acclamation** (*Stand*)

**All**—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

## THE COMMUNION RITE

**The Lord's Prayer**

**All**—Our Father...

**P**—Deliver us, Lord...

**All**—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

**Invitation to Peace**

**Invitation to Communion**  
(*Kneel*)

**P**—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**All**—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under

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**my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

**Communion Antiphon**  
(Ps 111 [110]:4-5)

**The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.**

**Prayer after Communion**  
(*Stand*)

**P**—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**All**—Amen.

## THE CONCLUDING RITES

**P**—The Lord be with you.  
**All**—And with your spirit.

**Prayer over the People**

**P**—Bow down for the blessing.  
(*Pause*)

May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.  
**All**—Amen.

**P**—May he free you always from every distress and confirm

your hearts in his love.

**All**—Amen.

**P**—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.  
**All**—Amen.

**P**—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.  
**All**—Amen.

**Dismissal**

**P**—The Mass has been offered. Go in the peace of Christ.  
**All**—Thanks be to God.

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